Government in the country for the welfare and development of women and Girl Child. Attempts are also being made to project positive images of the girl child so as to bring about changes in societal attitudes towards them. The Government has also initiated media campaigns to generate awareness on various issues relating to girl child. The National Plan of Action for the SAARC Decade (1991-2000 A.D.) for the girl child focussing on the survival, protection and development of the girl child has been formulated. A special set of interventions for adolescent girls has been institutionalised through the ICDS structure.

Government has enacted the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994 which came into force with effect from 1.1.96 and provides that use of diagnostic techniques for the purpose of pre-natal sex determination leading to female forticide is a legal offence.

Rehabilitation of Women and Child Labour in Bidi Sector

*503. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the approximate percentage of women and child labour in the bidi sector;

(b) whether Government have any plans to rehabilitate such labour in other sectors; and

(c) if so, the plans to reduce child labour in the bidi sector?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (c) As per the Report on Working and Living Conditions of Workers in Beedi Industry in India prepared by Labour Bureau (1995), it is estimated that 65.9% of workers in the bidi industry are women and 1% are children. Bidi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966 regulates the working conditions of all bidi and cigar workers including women workers. Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, prohibits employment of children in the process of bidi making. A programme for Elimination of Child Labour in all hazardous occupations including beedi making has been launched. So far 76 National Child Labour Projects covering about 1.5 lakh children in child labour endemic States have been sanctioned. These Projects involve identification of children employed in such industry, withdrawing them from work and putting them in special schools established for this purpose where they are given basic education and vocational training. Health checks, nutrition and payment of stipend are the other areas of concern addressed under the Programme.

ESI Hospitals and Dispensaries in Maharashtra

*504. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) total number of ESI hospitals and dispensaries which are functioning in various parts of the State of Maharashtra with district-wise details thereof;

(b) whether Government have any proposal to upgrade these dispensaries to bed hospitals in the near future;

(c) if so, details thereof; and

(d) the number of ESI dispensaries in Nagpur which are likely to be upgraded into 50 and more bed hospitals?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.